IN THE CLAIMS:

In this application, the present status of the claims is as listed below:

Claims 1 through 12 (Cancelled).

13. (Previously presented) A method for use in a node of a packet network including a plurality of communication paths, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving multiple copies of a signaling packet from at least two diverse communication paths of said packet network;

calculating a counter value related to a received packet identifier;

comparing the counter value with a packet identifier in each of the multiple copies of the received signaling packet to identify the multiple copies of the signaling packet; and

selecting one of the received multiple copies of the packet in response to comparing each packet identifier in the received multiple copies of the packet, wherein the one signaling packet selected is chosen without regard to the diverse communication path on which it is received.

14. (Previously presented) The method of claim 13 wherein the packet network is a signaling network for a transport network, wherein the at least two diverse communication paths are communication paths to a neighboring node of said node, wherein the neighboring node is determined as a function of a network topology of the transport network.

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 13 wherein the packet identifier is a sequence number, wherein the step of selecting includes selecting the packet received first from any of said at least two diverse communication paths having a sequence number that at least matches the counter value, and wherein the method further includes the step of incrementing the counter value if the counter value is at least matched.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15 wherein the selecting step includes the steps of:

if a value of the sequence number value of a received copy of the signaling packet is less than a counter value, discarding the received copy; and

if the value of the sequence number value of the received copy of the signaling packet is equal to the counter value, accepting the received copy.

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15 wherein the selecting step includes the steps of:

if a value of the sequence number value of a received copy of the signaling packet is less than a counter value, discarding the received copy; and

if the value of the sequence number value of the received copy of the signaling packet is not less than the counter value, accepting the received copy.

Claims 18 through 20 (Cancelled).

21. (Previously presented) The method of claim 13 wherein the signaling packet is formatted in accordance with an Internet Protocol (IP).

Claims 22 through 37 (Cancelled).

38. (Previously presented) The method of claim 13 wherein the signaling packet identifier is conveyed in an additional shim header of a multiprotocol label switching (MPLS) packet.